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ABSTRACT

This essay focuses on use of the Library of Congress Subject Headings system in online catalogs for the retrieval of information by subject. Among the topics addressed are differences among catalog forms (card, microform, and computer); user interface with different forms of catalog; the types of subject indexes employed in present online catalogs; and factors to be considered in designing future online catalog systems, including several desirable features not provided by current systems. Accompanying the essay are seven figures, three tables, and a 14-item reference list. (JL)

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RESEARCH LIBRARIES in OCLC: A Quarterly

Subject Access In The Online Catalog

by

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Several articles^{1,2} for different audiences have broadcast the changes which are taking place in research libraries because of technology and the growing acceptance of shared resources, bibliographic networks, and computerized holdings lists. For the library user these changes will eventually mean improved subject access and better document delivery. For the library staff and the keepers of our cataloging traditions, it is becoming a time to assess traditional ways and means of access, maintenance of cataloging files, and authority files.³

Nowhere is this assessment and redesign of library files and look-up procedures more evident than in the design of online public access catalogs (OPAC). A soon-to-be-published OCLC research report, "The User Interface in Online Public Access Catalogs,"⁴ funded in part by the Council on Library Resources (CLR), documents the existing diversity in access, ease-of-use, indexing, and specialized search capabilities of twelve operating online catalogs. Rather than summarize that report (which will be highlighted in a future issue of this journal), I will use it as a backdrop for comments I would like to make about subject access - that all important and little understood process.

The title I have chosen for this article is identical to that of a recent CLR report⁵ by Carol A. Mandel, prepared for the BSDP (Bibliographic Service Development Program). My reason for this choice is again to use its recommendations as a backdrop for comments I would like to make. The five recommendations of the CLR/BDSP report are to:

- Understand the relationship between library bibliographic records and researchers' subject searches;
- Enrich the search terms available in library bibliographic records;
- Enrich the entry vocabulary for subject searches;
- Get the most from the controlled vocabulary; and
- Develop and promote standards for the user interface in the online library catalog.⁶

Many may see these two reports as covering different territory, but I see the CLR/BDSP recommendations as most important for the design of online catalogs even though this design at present seems to rest in the hands of many

different library system designers or vendors. The recommendations in the CLR report are aimed at the Library of Congress from where, for the most part, our bibliographic records and controlled vocabulary improvements come. But the report also calls for studies of subject searches and for standards for the user interface in online catalogs.

Vocabulary

My major focus, as in the CLR report, is on Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) as it is now our principal vocabulary for online subject searching, just as it has been our principal vocabulary in card and COM catalogs. If we are to judge from a recent bibliography of critical views of LCSH⁶ and catalog use studies,⁷ the CLR/BDSP recommendations could not have come at a better time, for the library world is busy building machine-readable databases and "new" subject indexes to them for online access. This is the best time to re-think how we will allow patrons to search these files (e.g., LCSH match or keyword free text searches), how we will help them search, and what we will display for their perusal.

What the Library of Congress will do with LCSH and other authority files online⁸ will have a profound effect on every library's online catalog. The CONDOC (Consortium to Develop an Online Catalog) requirements, reported by Joseph R. Matthews,⁹ ranked an online authority control file for names and subject headings with cross references fourth out of forty features. Surprisingly, Consortium members ranked call number access third, and keywords in titles access twelfth. These features and some of the "unheeded research findings about catalog use"¹⁰ may all affect subject access routes to library collections someday, but not all the implications of these are being weighed carefully by some system designers as I will show later. Some features can already be seen to have unfortunate consequences for subject searching in an online catalog.

In this brief paper, I would like to review subject access via card, COM, and online catalogs and itemize some of the improvements and unfortunate consequences already evident in the newest online forms of a library's catalog. I will end with some personal recommendations about online catalog design for improved subject access.

At the outset I want to acknowledge the assistance and enlightenment I received from OCLC staff, especially the Office of Research under Neal K. Kaske, who kept me informed of all the research, in progress or recently reported,¹¹⁻¹⁴ which had an effect on my own perspective of the developments which could affect online catalogs in general, and subject access in particular.

Forms of the Catalog

Through the years since Charles Ammi Cutter and the beginning of LC's card distribution service, we have created several physical forms of the catalog in our libraries, but the card, COM, and online forms appear most prevalent at this time. Although card and COM catalogs allow the same subject access points, those of online catalogs are different from card and COM catalogs. Each form of catalog presents different styles of entry and arrangement. Each form (see Table 1) displays records in different ways, arranging these records using a different sorting rule, and often displays differing amounts of information about each item. Each seems to have advantages the other forms do not.

Noticeably different in each online catalog examined by Hildreth⁴ is the amount of useful information provided about subject access. The diversity of subject access approaches in online catalogs can be represented by a continuum from the post-coordination of Boolean search operations, permuted subject headings and titles to the pre-coordination of subject headings and their subdivisions. The added subject access routes in various online catalogs would appear to improve access, but, in fact, vary from OPAC to OPAC and may already be confusing users. (see Figures 1-6)

User Interface

Searching in five different online catalogs is shown in Figures 1-6. These are all large research or public libraries whose users might occasionally use any of the other catalogs. When they do, they may be confused not only by the different user interfaces (different command entry techniques, different capabilities, different reports and messages), but they will probably also be confused by the displays of catalog records, the arrangement and content of these records and the various record fields where their search words were searched in the file. This may be why the CLR/BDSP report recommends standards for the user interface and improved entry vocabulary.

Table 1 summarizes the different subject access points, displays and user aids in card, COM and online catalogs. Progressively, it would appear that subject access is improving. But is it? When we review the advantages of earlier forms of the catalog, we can see that not all those features are kept or improved in the newer form. One might say we are "throwing the baby out with the bath water." I recently revised a table developed for an earlier paper¹⁰ which shows that not all is coming up roses in online catalogs (Table 2). I have marked those advantages and disadvantages of each form of catalog which affect subject access.

Figures 1-6 indicate the variety now seen in online catalog design.

Table 1.
Different Routes to Subject Access in Library Catalogs

Form of Catalog	Subject Access Points & Style of Heading	Display of Records (Content & Filing Order)	User Aids to Other Access Points, for Improved Search Results
Card Catalog	LCSH or Sears S.H. complete word by word match; words in controlled order, with subdivisions for form, geographic, chronological, topical aspects; some headings contain inversions and phrases for compound concept headings	Standard, predefined "unit" records alphabetically sorted by main entry; display of main term "hits" affected by filing order of form, geographic, chronological and topical subdivisions.	Printed on separate cards and filed within catalog: 1) Cross references (see) from lead-in term to used heading 2) Cross reference (see also) to more specific or related headings. 3) General reference to common subdivisions or unnamed specific headings
COM Catalog	Same as above.	Predefined abridged "unit" records may have data elements rearranged for easier scanning. Filing order as above, or by most recent date of publication.	Above not usually included; reliance on use of printed copy of LCSH or separate "Subject Guide," prepared from tracings and LCSH cross reference structure.
Online Catalog	Wide diversity of approaches. In some, same as above. In others, "uncontrolled" keyword access to title words and subject heading words from record or selected field with or without Boolean operators, proximity operators, truncation. In others, same as above plus "uncontrolled" keyword access to title words and subject heading words from record or selected field with or without Boolean operators, proximity operators, truncation; Call number searching (truncated to class number or in full); Rare option: display of LCSH for choice of all search-related headings; Derived search keys may be required for designated fields; Free text term search may be in combined fields; Search sets may be combined.	<i>Index</i> lists online, sometimes with postings information for LCSH terms or keywords, call number, etc. Brief or full catalog records with data elements rearranged; sorting rule yields non-conventional display of records (e.g., by accession number, or latest date in, or first words in record, etc.); sorting not usually controlled by user.	May be browsable index lists for headings and terms in searchable fields; use of machine-readable LCSH and name authority files as separate file for browsing and term selection; in-context field searching; restrict or limit results by some parameter (e.g., language, date, format or material); rare option: save search for later execution; error messages, user prompts and help messages.

Subject Indexes

These catalogs and several others examined this past year, (see OCLC report cited earlier⁴) may be incorporating features with unfortunate consequences for online subject access. I have identified six such consequences already (see Table 3) which lead me to conclude that we are not necessarily making improvements when we make changes for increased subject access. For example, allowing access to "free or uncontrolled text" such as keywords in titles and subject headings is a mixed blessing. False drops or long lists may frustrate users of online catalogs (see Table 3, #4). To be able to search call numbers, but not to be shown what the call number means, may be confusing to a user.

Some of the findings of the studies summarized by Markey⁷ show users' impatience at the catalog. Usually users

will consult a single subject heading and no more. If they continue to behave this way online, we may need to prompt or assist them by automatically displaying additional search terms. Few of the existing online catalogs do this for users, and our authority files are not now set up to help that process. A more important feature in online catalogs than Boolean operations or proximity searching may be subject search prompts and aids.

Because our present practices of constructing subject term indexes do not usually enhance the existing controlled vocabulary, a user's search terms may not match a controlled vocabulary term or a title keyword. Studies have shown that a searcher is likely either to give up or choose a term broader than an accepted term. Perhaps with system

Continued

Table 2.
Forms of Catalogs—Advantages and Disadvantages from
the User and Staff Viewpoint (Revision of Table in Ref. 10)
[* = Characteristic Related to Subject Access]

CARD CATALOGS		
—Advantages—		—Disadvantages—
User: 1. Alphabetical, orderly parts 2. Unit entry, with all information available everywhere *3. Guide cards and notes available with reference to related entries 4. Form of catalog similar throughout 5. Nonmediated, self-service 6. Easily updated 7. Can contain temporary information Staff: *1. Name and subject authority control 2. Collocation of works, authors		1. Over time, inconsistent rules of main-entry form and choice of form of subject heading 2. Must copy out all information needed by hand 3. Cryptic notes and confusing form of entry 4. Different style of entry, different form of card in different library for different materials *5. No "natural language" access *6. Too few cross references 7. Catalog available in only one location, even in decentralized system 1. Error-ridden filing; misplaced cards *2. Expensive, labor-intensive to maintain, new, old entries x-ref structure *3. Limited access — one arrangement 4. Reproducibility difficult 5. Inflexible 6. Limited information — no holding information, only crude location information
COM (FICHE OR REEL) CATALOG		
—Advantages—		—Disadvantages—
User: 1. Available at many locations 2. Several entry files (author, title, subject) *3. Can see several records at once *4. Can copy entries if printer available 5. Inexpensive equipment for readers, sometimes available on loan Staff: 1. Reduces delay in listing new items 2. Saves money spent in filing cards *3. Subject headings may be checked against machine-readable LCSH for quality control		1. Not easily updated 2. Not very readable *3. Rearrangement of output impossible *4. Cross-references not listed *5. Reliance on "offline" authority list like LCSH which is not specific to catalog entries 6. Guidance within catalog not available *7. No "natural language" access. 1. Some updates costly *2. May not be user-oriented 3. Incomplete record of library's holdings if no retrospective conversion
ONLINE LIBRARY CATALOGS		
—Advantages—		—Disadvantages—
User: 1. Easily updated, with changes explained *2. Can provide table lookups or browsing in authority files (author, title, subject) 3. Available at many locations *4. New access points and combinations; search terms may be natural language *5. Can provide online user assistance 6. Can see several records at once 7. Union lists possible Staff: 1. Less expensive to maintain than card catalog 2. Can provide more location information 3. Resource sharing and listing at many locations *4. Better access to subject words and names may be possible 5. Subsets of catalog possible *6. Various sorts possible		1. Need of staff assistance on occasion 2. Equipment failure possible 3. Queuing problems 4. User training necessary *5. Cross references and general notes not present *6. Terms too common — may abort search 7. Variable output formats and sorts may be confusing 8. Printer not always available 1. Some forms costly to be updated *2. May not have user-oriented retrieval system (which is friendly, forgiving, acceptable) 3. Incomplete record of library's holdings if no retrospective conversion *4. Authority files and x-ref structure used may not represent specific catalog's headings

guidance an online searcher could be led to other search terms by means of hierarchical displays of related terms or by viewing an outline of the subject area closest to the search terms. (Our library classification schedules, with some modifications, might help here.)

Design of Future Systems

At the present time, users apparently have low expectations of what assistance they will get at the library catalog.^{11,12} Online catalog users could be pleasantly surprised by a system response that automatically presents broader, narrower and related terms. Users could then select terms by line number, and search formulations would proceed "on target." Few existing online catalogs provide such assistance now.

The present picture is not quite as dark as I have painted it. Several of the recommendations made by earlier researchers of catalog use are now being incorporated into online catalogs:

- *Geographic Term Access* is facilitated online, through access to every word in the subject heading phrase (including subdivided and inverted adjectival terms for geographic terms).

Table 3.

Unfortunate Consequences of Present-Day Online Subject Access Procedures

1. In those OPACs in which content of the catalog record (i.e., unit record) is more accessible, this access is less controlled. All words in the title field(s) are now accessible except for those words on a "stop list." The fields used to build "title" keyword searches may not be uniform across online catalogs.
2. In those OPACs which require letter-for-letter matches with LCSH and titles, punctuation (especially hyphens), word order, and abbreviations may cause problems in searching unless treatment before indexes is explained to user.
3. The controlled vocabularies (e.g., LCSH, LCC, DDC) exist in the online index (created from the catalog records) only as a subset of used headings or class numbers. These indexes include "uncontrolled" or unrecorded use of subdivisions and Cutter numbers. There are no lead-in terms (see references) and no see also references online in these lists usually. The call numbers appear as unexplained codes.
4. Common words in titles or subject headings (e.g., history, basic, education, literature, America, etc.) which cannot be placed on a stop word list, slow transaction throughout and may be prohibited or placed in background processing for Boolean searches or proximity checks.
5. Allowing keyword searches in a combination of fields (e.g., title and subject heading, or both subject headings in a record) may cause false drops. The retrieval techniques needed to prevent this, such as proximity operators, may not be present.
6. The filing order of the subject heading entries in the index lists (e.g., main LCSH and all subdivisions) may cause confusion by not following the LCSH printed order or the order of headings in the card catalog. Main heading and subdivisions may be interspersed with inverted or compound headings. (See figures 1-6)
7. The number and kind of heading indexes in which the user may browse vary from OPAC to OPAC.
8. Entry of Boolean operators exist as explicit or implicit procedures from OPAC to OPAC, or within a single OPAC.

- Some *current terminology access* can be found when title word searches are permitted. They, in turn, can serve as hooks to find tracings and call numbers which can be searched systematically.
- Some systems allow *search output to be limited* by publication date, by language, or by form.
- A *browsing feature*, if call number search is possible, permits a scan of the shelves at the online catalog. (Shades of the classified catalog!)

These are all improvements, to be sure, but each improvement needs to be assessed to see if it brings along some disadvantages or if it might not require some additional file maintenance or redesign. Several online catalog system designers are concerned about costs and system efficiency. User efficiency will also have to be considered.

A few subject access features now being incorporated into online catalogs appear to imitate features that have been available for some time on such systems as DIALOG, NEXIS/LEXIS, MEDLINE, ORBIT and BRS. Database suppliers have had to reassess the design of their databases as free text searching (in title and abstract) became available. Proximity operators and other devices to refine

User: SIS/ISLAM

```
11 1 ISLA, JOSE FRANCISCO DE, 1703-1781
12 63 ISLAM
13* 1 ISLAM (THE ARABIC WORD)
14* 2 ISLAM AND ART
15 1 ISLAM AND CAPITALISM
16 5 ISLAM AND ECONOMICS
17 1 ISLAM AND POLITICS
18 1 ISLAM AND POLITICS—ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES
19 1 ISLAM AND POLITICS—INDONESIA
20 1 ISLAM AND POLITICS—IRAN
PAGE 2 of 3 FOR OTHER PAGES ENTER PS AND PAGE NUMBER
FOR TITLES ON A SPECIFIC SUBJECT ENTER SBL/
AND LINE NUMBER
```

User: PS3

```
21 1 ISLAM AND POLITICS—IRAN—MISCELLANEA
22 1 ISLAM AND POLITICS—MALAYSIA—KELANTAN
23 1 ISLAM AND POLITICS—MISCELLANEA
•
•
•
```

User: SIS/ISLAM—ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES

```
11 3 ISLAM IN LITERATURE
12 23 ISLAM—ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES
13 6 ISLAM—AFRICA
14* 1 ISLAM—AFRICA—ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES
15 1 ISLAM—AFRICA—BIBLIOGRAPHY
16 1 ISLAM—AFRICA—CONGRESSES
17* 1 ISLAM—AFRICA, NORTH—HISTORY
18 1 ISLAM—AFRICA, SUB-SAHARAN—BIBLIOGRAPHY
19 3 ISLAM—AFRICA, WEST
20* 1 ISLAM—AFRICA, WEST—ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES
PAGE 2 OF 3 FOR OTHER PAGES ENTER PS AND PAGE NUMBER
FOR TITLES ON A SPECIFIC SUBJECT ENTER SBL/
AND LINE NUMBER
```

User: PS3

```
21 1 ISLAM—AFRICA, WEST—HISTORY—ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES
22 5 ISLAM—APOLOGETIC WORKS
23 1 ISLAM—ASIA
24 1 ISLAM—ASIA, SOUTHEASTERN
25* 1 ISLAM—ASIA, SOUTHEASTERN—CONGRESS
26 5 ISLAM—BIBLIOGRAPHY
27 2 ISLAM—BIOGRAPHY
28* 1 ISLAM—CHAD
29* 1 ISLAM—COLLECTED WORKS
30* 1 ISLAM—COLLECTIONS
```

Figure 1.

Browsing in Online Index — Library A

Indicates number of items retrieved under each subject heading beginning with *Islam*.

(Note: filing arrangement of main heading, main heading with subdivisions and compound main heading, total number of subject heading entries in list beginning with *Islam* not reported.)

search output, such as searching by document type, geographic aspect, or date of publication, have been added as separate access points to be combined with subject terms. OPACs may have to do the same, which may require reloading of subject tracings and revising LCSH subdivision practice.¹³ The CLR/BDSP recommendations do not specifically refer to this problem, but data represented in Figures 1-6 point directly to the need to pay particular attention to LCSH subdivisions.

As online subject access systems are designed or re-designed, let us hope we will see some of these features:

- *Automatic interaction between searcher and computer system so that the best list of search terms can be found.*

This feature may require work-list browsing prompts, displays of command options or a search-term "menu." At each step, the searcher would be shown the number of hits for the term as entered *and* the result using related terms. ("Related" could be determined by conventional indexing rules and authority files as well as by automatic rules such as stemming routines, frequency of occurrence in a retrieved set, etc.) This feature would ease the burden on the searcher to think of, or key in, additional terms.

User: BROWSE SU ISLAM

Browse request: BROWSE SU ISLAM
Browse result: 254 subject headings found in the subject index

1. Authority (Islam)
2. Bibliography — Bibliography — Islam
3. Birth control — Religious aspects — Islam
4. Birth control — Religious aspects — Islam — Congresses
5. Blasphemy (Islam)
6. Christianity and other religions — Islam
7. Christianity and other religions — Islam
8. Christianity and other religions — Islam — Addresses, essays, lectures
9. Christianity and other religions — Islam — Bibliography
10. Christianity and other religions — Islam — History
11. Christianity and other religions — Islam
12. Civilization, Islam
13. Classification — Books — Islam
14. Communism and Islam
15. Communism and Islam — Sudan
16. Creation (Islam)
17. Dar'ul Islam Rebellion, 1948-1962
18. Darul Islam Movement
-
-
-
37. Islam
38. Islam (The Arabic word)
39. Islam — Addresses, essays, lectures
40. Islam — Africa
41. Islam — Africa — Addresses, essays, lectures
42. Islam — Africa — Bibliography
43. Islam — Africa — Congresses
44. Islam — Africa, East
45. Islam — Africa — History
46. Islam — Africa, North — History
47. Islam — Africa, Northwest — History
48. Islam — Africa, Sub-Saharan — Bibliography
49. Islam — Africa, West
50. Islam — Africa, West — History — Addresses, essays, lectures
51. Islam — Algeria
52. Islam — Algeria — Addresses, essays, lectures
53. Islam and art
54. Islam and capitalism

Figure 2.

Browsing in Online Index List — Library B

Reports every subject heading with word *Islam*. Number of items retrieved per subject heading is *not* indicated.
Note: filing arrangement of main heading, subdivisions and compound main heading.

- *Automatic display of some retrieved items for relevance feedback and iteration of the above feature using different selection rules.*
- *Automatic display of logical outlines (or classified lists) to select search terms in context: some broader, some coordinate, some narrower. This may help increase output or sharpen precision of search.*
- *Automatic display of limit options (language, date of publication, etc.) This could help reduce output of search.*

Continued

User: BRWS ISLAM

BRWS TERM FILE:LIBRARYC. ENTRY TERM:ISLAM
B01 ISLA, JOSE FRANCISCO DE// (AUTH = 2)
B02 ILSA, JUAN DE// (AUTH = 1)
B03 ISLAHI, AMIN ASHAN// (AUTH = 4)
B04 ISLAHI, MUHAMMAD YUSUF// (AUTH = 2)
B05 ISLAKUTSHELWA SIBONA NGOMOPHO// (TITL = 1)
B06 + ISLAM// (TITL = 39; INDX = 831)
B07 ISLAM (THE ARABIC WORD)// (INDX = 1)
B08 ISLAM & FAMILY PLANNING// (TITL = 1)
B09 ISLAM & I.E. DAN KEBUDAYAAN KEBANGSAAN// (TITL = 1)
B10 ISLAM & NATIONALISM IN THE SUDAN// (TITL = 1)
READY FOR NEW COMMAND (FOR NEXT PAGE, XMIT ONLY)

Figure 3-A.

Browsing in Online Index with Single Term — Library C (Display 1)

Indicates cumulative number of hits in index (title keywords) *and* all subject headings beginning with *Islam* (index). Title keywords and subject headings alphabetically *preceding* and *following* Islam are displayed.

User: BRWS ISLAM—CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE

BRWS TERM FILE:LIBRARYC. ENTRY TERM:ISLAM—CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE—
B01 ISLAM—CHINA—HISTORY// (INDX = 1)
B02 ISLAM—COLLECTED WORKS// (INDX = 9)
B03 ISLAM—COLLECTIONS// (INDX = 1)
B04 ISLAM—CONGRESSES// (INDX = 12)
B05 ISLAM—CONGRESSES—HISTORY// (INDX = 1)
B06 + ISLAM—CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE// (INDX = 9)
B07 ISLAM—CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE—ADDRESSES// (INDX = 1)
B08 ISLAM—DICTIONARIES// (INDX = 6)
B09 ISLAM—DICTIONARIES—ARABIC// (INDX = 2)
B10 ISLAM—DICTIONARIES—MALAY// (INDX = 2)
READY FOR NEW COMMAND (FOR NEXT PAGE, XMIT ONLY):

User: R B6

SET 3 9: RETR INDX/ISLAM —CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE
READY FOR NEW COMMAND
DISPLAY 3 ITEMS 1-3 OF 9
FILE:LIBRARYC. TITLE/LINE—SET 3
1. 70-97135: MARTIN, MALACHI. THE ENCOUNTER. NEW YORK, FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX, 1970. C1969. XVI, 488 P, 22CM.
LC CALL NUMBER: BM585 .M365
2. 73-157725: JONES, LEWIS BEVAN. THE PEOPLE OF THE MOSQUE. CALCUTTA, ASSOCIATION PRESS, Y. M. C. A., 1932. XIII, 355 P, 19 CM.
LC CALL NUMBER: CP161 .J6 1932B
3. 75-546281: NOSOWSKI, JERZY. POLSKA LITERATURA POLEMICZNO-ANTYISLAMISTYCZNA XVI, XVII I XVIII W. WARSZAWA, AKADEMIA TEOLOGII KATOLICKIEJ, 1974. V, 25 CM.
LC CALL NUMBER: DR479 .P7 N67
READY FOR NEW COMMAND OR NEW ITEM NBR (FOR NEXT PAGE, XMIT ONLY):

Figure 3-B.

Browsing in Index with LCSH Subdivision — Library C (Display 2)

Browsing list shows nearby LCSH subdivisions.

Moreover, certain steps will have to be taken to correct the present construction of index lists for browsing online. The CLR/BDSP report refers specifically to this, and no National Subject Authority File Service⁸ should proceed until these points are considered.

The Dartmouth Conference Report¹⁴ and the Hildreth study⁴ point to the complexity of the problems surrounding online public access catalog design. The Hildreth report contains a figure which illustrates this complexity very well (represented here as Figure 7).

As we move from the traditional world of the card catalog and the catalog record generated by human catalogers into the dynamic explicit environment of the online catalog, we face a myriad of possibilities in hardware, software modes, messages and displays. We can see that the tasks to be performed by the user and the explicit

functions which the system can perform by way of assistance, training and transactions make subject access different from what it was in the card or even the COM catalog.

The variety now evident in the features of existing OPACs is evidence of the opportunities available to the system designer. What is not quite so evident is which new features will become uniform across all systems and which will have unfortunate consequences and have to be removed or reworked.

My observations in this article are based on experience. I have only been able to highlight some glaring problems. Others will be reported, I am sure, by other observers. Critical observations are an important part of system design, especially if we are at a crossroads in the organization of information resources and access to our library collections.

```
User: FIND S 'ISLAM'
NUMBER OF HITS = 1429 [FIND] SEQUENTIAL RECORDS 1 TO 6

1 ISLAM DICTIONARIES.
  HUGHES, THOMAS PATRICK, 1838-1911.
  A DICTIONARY OF ISLAM, 1896.
  BP40 H8 1896

2 ISLAM ALGERIA.
  RINN, LOUIS MARIE, P. 1838.
  MARABOUTS ET KHOUAN, 1884.
  BP65 A3 R3

3 ISLAM PERIODICALS.
  ORIENTE MODERNO, ROMA,
  D461 .07

4 ISLAM PERIODICALS.
  REVUE DES ETUDES ISLAMIQUES, PARIS,
  BP1 R53

5 ISLAM.
  MEYERHOF, MAX, 1874-1945.
  LE MONDE ISLAMIQUE, [1926]
  BP161 M5

6 JERUSALEM IN ISLAM.
  IBN AL-FIRKAH, IBRAHIM IBN ABD AL-RAHMAN, 1262-1329.
  BA'ITH AL-NUFUS ILA ZIYARAT AL-QUDS AL-MAHRUS 1935.
  BP187.5 J47 A18
```

Figure 4-A.

Online Single Term Subject Search — Library D (Display 1)

Note report of hits, automatic display of six records, order of entries and abbreviated record.

```
User: FIND S 'ISLAM-CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE'
PAGE 5 'ISLAM-CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE'
NUMBER OF HITS = 9 [FIND] SEQUENTIAL RECORDS 1 TO 6

1 ISLAM CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE.
  MARTIN, MALACHI.
  THE ENCOUNTER, [1970, C1969]
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  JONES, LEWIS BEVAN.
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  DE WILDE, JAMES COPRAY, 1896-
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  ATEISTY V NASTUPLENII : 1978.
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  MARKS, STANLEY J.
  THREE DAYS OF JUDGEMENT : 1981.
  BL2730 M37 T57
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Figure 4-B.

Online LCSH Subject Search — Library D (Display 2)

Note report of hits, display of records, etc.

```
User: SIS/ISLAM-ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES
11 3 ISLAM IN LITERATURE
12 23 ISLAM-ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES
13 6 ISLAM-AFRICA
14* 1 ISLAM-AFRICA-ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES
15 1 ISLAM-AFRICA-BIBLIOGRAPHY
16 1 ISLAM-AFRICA-CONGRESSES
17* 1 ISLAM-AFRICA, NORTH-HISTORY
18 1 ISLAM-AFRICA, SUB-SAHARAN-BIBLIOGRAPHY
19 3 ISLAM-AFRICA, WEST
20* 1 ISLAM-AFRICA, WEST-ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES
PAGE 2 OF 23 MATCHES FIRST 0 SKIPPED
FOR OTHER PAGES ENTER PS AND PAGE NUMBER
FOR TITLES ON A SPECIFIC SUBJECT ENTER SBL/
AND LINE NUMBER
```

```
User: SBL/12
PAGE 1 OF 3 23 MATCHES FIRST 0 SKIPPED
01 BP20167 / / Islam, past influence and present challenge //1979
02 BP20G551 / / We believe in one god //1979
03 BP20M2917 / / Islamic perspectives //1979
04 BP165G561975 / Giorgio Le / Individualism and conformity in classical I/1977
05 DS35.4A2E84 / / Essays on Islamic civilization //1976
06 BM42D67 / / Drei Wege zu dem einen Gott //1976
07 BP88M313R512 / Ma'h'm'ud, / Du dout a la foi //1975
08 BP165N312 / Nasr, Seyy / Islam //1975
09 BP20M42 / / Melanges d'islamologie //1974
10 BP2017 / / Islamwissenschaftliche Abhandlungen //1974
ISLAM-ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES FOR MORE ENTER PG2
```

```
User: PG2
PAGE 2 OF 3 23 MATCHES FIRST 0 SKIPPED
11 BP20S921973 / Symposium / Studies on Islam //1974
12 BP170N3 / Nadvi, Abu / Speaking plainly to the west //1973
13 BP161M191971 / Macdonald, / Aspects of Islam //1971
14*S.297SCH86D / Schuon, Fr / Dimensions of Islam //1970
15*S.297M1451968 / / The Macdonald presentation volume //1968
16*S.297N1861 / Nasr, Seyy / Ideals and realities of Islam //1967
17 BP165C3 / Charnay, J / Normes et valeurs dans l'Islam contemporain //1966
18 DS33N6 / Nohara, Sh / Ajia no rekishi to shis'o //1966
19*S.910.091ST49 / Stewart-Ro / The traditional Near East //1966
20 BP165C35 / Chirri, Mo / Inquiries about Islam //1965
ISLAM-ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES FOR MORE ENTER PG3
```

```
User: PG3
PAGE 3 OF 3 23 MATCHES FIRST 0 SKIPPED
21*S.297C4471 / Chirri, Mo / Inquiries about Islam //1965
22*S.297J223L / Jamali, Mo / Letters on Islam //1965
23 BP25G34 / Gam'o, Rei / Isur:amu //1958
ISLAM-ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES ALL RETRIEVED
```

Figure 5.

Online Subject Search and Retrieval in Library A.

Order of list of 23 items retrieved is by date of publication.

Linda Hall Library Becomes OCLC Member

The Bibliographic Center for Research, Denver, CO, and OCLC, Dublin, OH, are pleased to announce that the Linda Hall Library, Kansas City, MO, will join the OCLC network.

"We welcome the Linda Hall Library to the OCLC community of libraries," said OCLC President Rowland C. W. Brown. "The Linda Hall Library joins 72 other research libraries that are sharing their resources through OCLC and our international community of over 6,000 libraries."

Founded in 1946, Linda Hall is a specialized scientific and technical research library with 503,000 volumes, 16,200 periodical subscriptions, and 636,400 microforms.

"Our primary purpose in joining OCLC is to make our collection more readily available on a national basis," said Thomas D. Gillies, Director of the Linda Hall Library. "The research community depends on us, and we are interested in having our collection used by as many people as possible through a system such as OCLC's."

Linda Hall's holding list, which is currently published every two years, is going to be converted to machine readable form by OCLC's Retrospective Conversion Services. The conversion involves over 28,900 titles. "Eventually we will produce our holdings list using OCLC tapes," said Mr. Gillies. "We would expect publication of the list to return to an annual basis." According to Mr. Gillies, about 800 copies of holdings lists are distributed to libraries around the world.

The Linda Hall Library will participate in OCLC through the Bibliographical Center for Research. According to Jo An S. Segal, Executive Director of BCR, "We are pleased to welcome this outstanding research library into the BCR network family. The valuable scientific collections, particularly serials, will contribute richly to the resources of all OCLC participants."

Worth Repeating

Jacob Bronowski, in The Ascent of Man:

"Democracy of the intellect, based on the widespread availability of knowledge and information, is essential to the success and continuity of man's ascent. An aristocracy of intellect in which access to knowledge is limited to the elite, breeds revolution and destruction."

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